



# **INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONALLY FOCUSED THERAPY**

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**8.25.23**

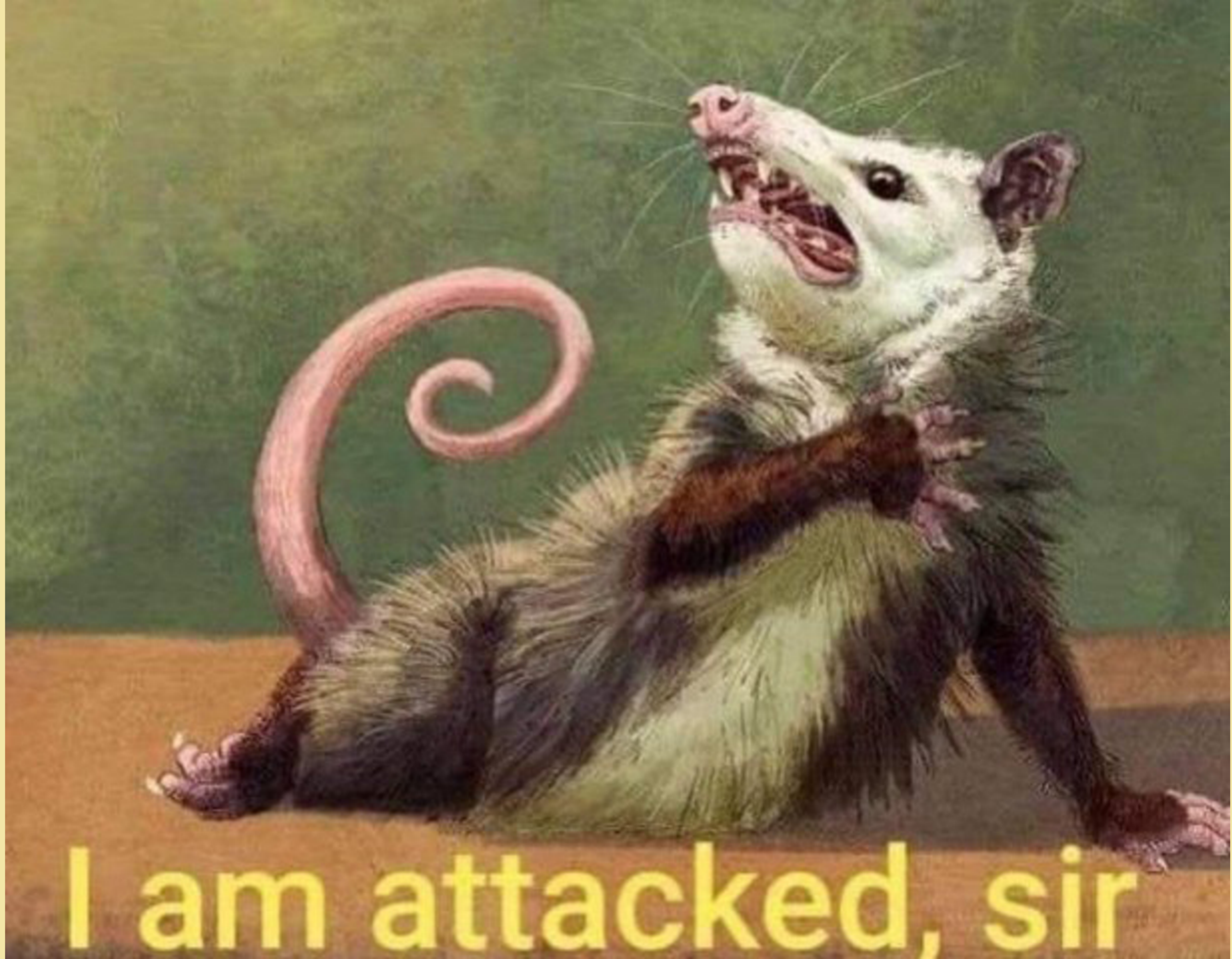




**No Robots Here...**





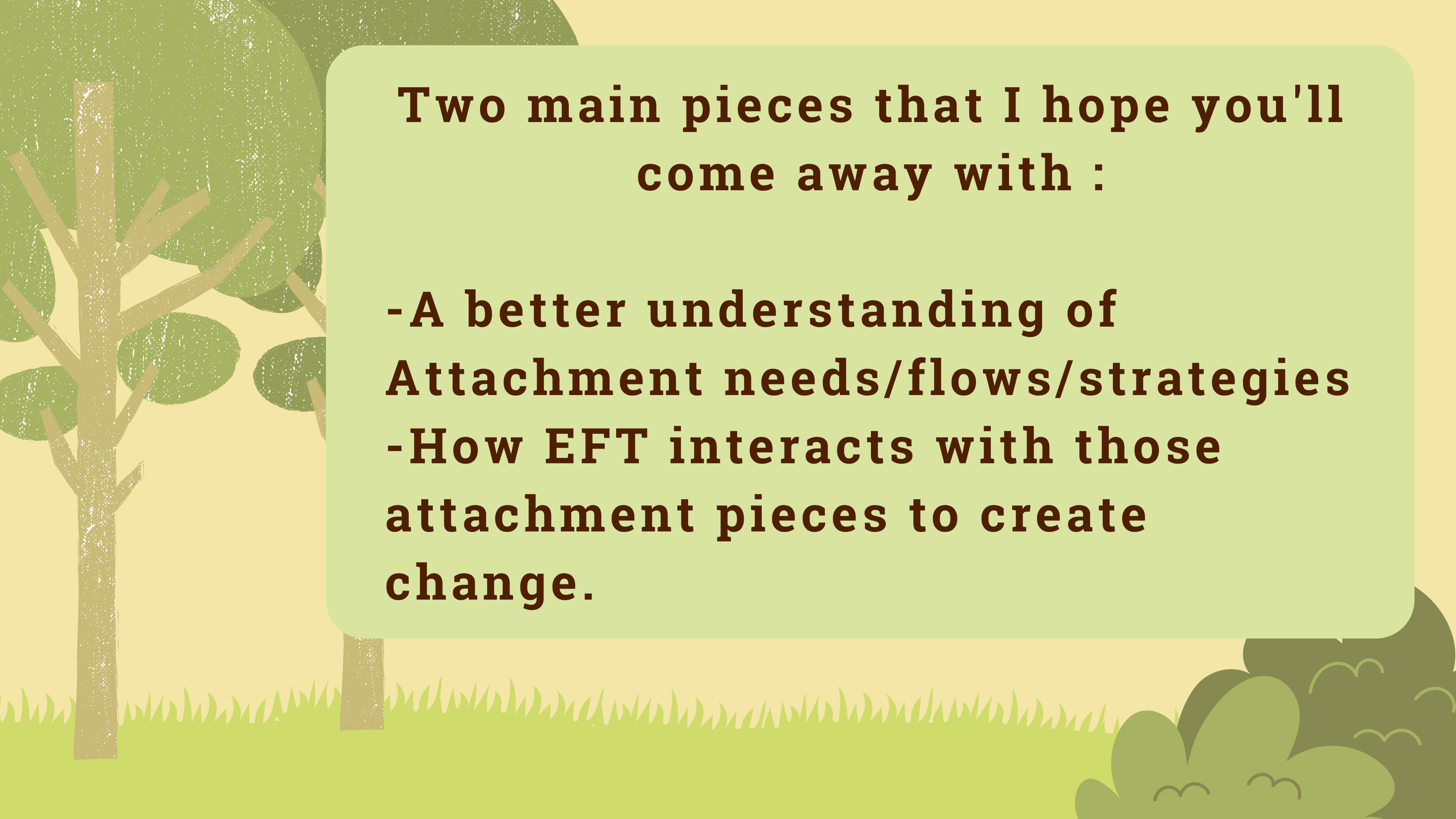


I am attacked, sir





**Welcome to “here”**



**Two main pieces that I hope you'll  
come away with :**

- A better understanding of  
Attachment needs/flows/strategies**
- How EFT interacts with those  
attachment pieces to create  
change.**



# ATTACHMENT IS THE CODE





foxes-in-love

ANIMALS LEARN  
THEIR MOST VITAL  
SKILL FIRST.



HOURS OLD FOAL CAN  
RUN, A NEWLY HATCHED  
SNAKE CAN BITE.



BABIES CRY.

<https://foxes-in-love.tumblr.com/>  
@green\_fox\_blue\_fox



WHAT DO BABIES DO?

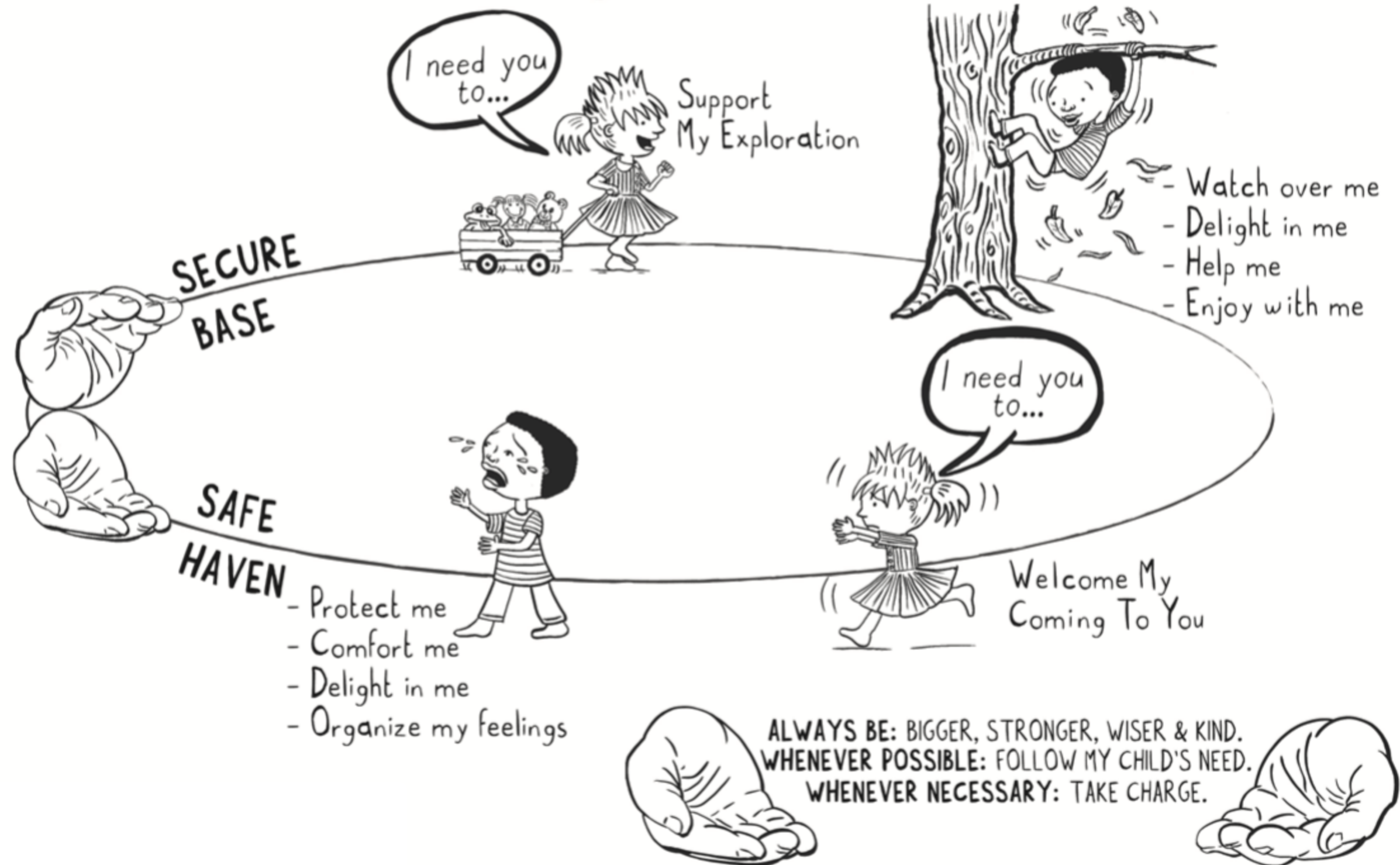


YOUR MOST IMPORTANT  
SURVIVAL SKILL IS  
ASKING FOR HELP.



# Circle of Security®

Parent Attending To The Child's Needs







**EFT as the "gold standard"**  
**(whatever that means)**





# **The Roots of Emotionally Focused Therapy**



- **Attachment**
- **Experiential**
- **Rogerian**
- **Structural**

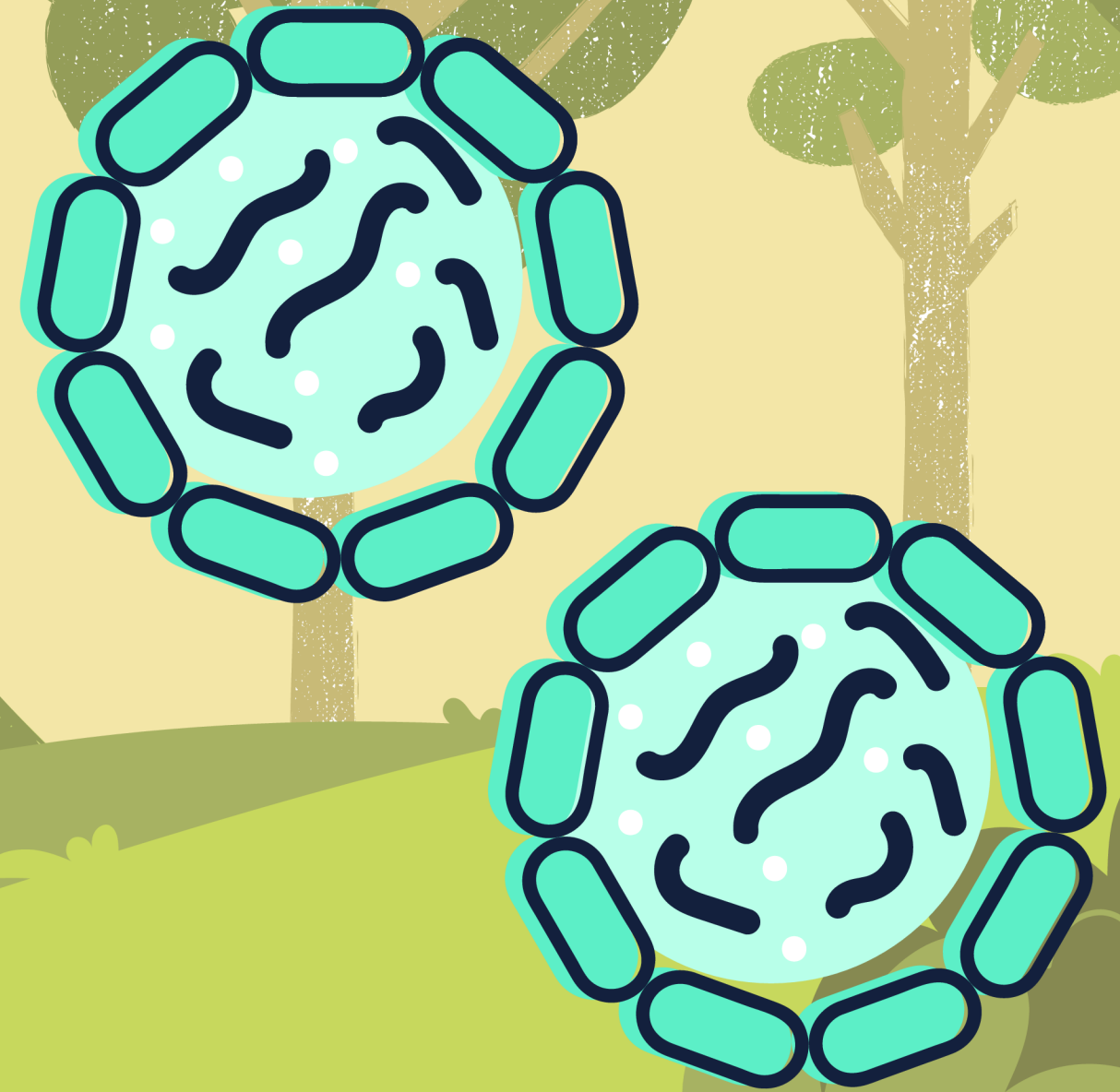


THROUGH OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR CAREGIVERS EARLY IN LIFE, WE DEVELOP BELIEFS ABOUT THE WORLD THAT INFORM OUR ABILITY TO FORM MEANINGFUL AND SATISFYING BONDS. THOSE BELIEFS ARE LARGELY ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT WE CAN EXPECT TO GET OUR NEEDS MET.

ATTACHMENT: A FOCUSED, ENDURING AND EMOTIONALLY MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE, CHARACTERISED BY SEEKING TO GAIN OR MAINTAIN PROXIMITY THROUGH PHYSICAL CONTACT OR COMMUNICATION.



**Attachment is a threat-  
management strategy**





**Secure attachment stems from  
caregivers who are:**

- **AVAILABLE**

- **RESPONSIVE**

- **EMOTIONALLY ENGAGED**

**(Emotional Engagement =  
Attunement)**





**This father is trying to  
comfort his little baby...**







# Attachment Needs

- Need for acceptance
- Need for closeness
- Need for understanding
- Need to feel important
- Need to feel loved
- Need for appreciation
- Need to be cared for
- Need to be respected

# Baby



Receive  
Comfort



Core Skills 2



Empathic  
Response

# Dad



## Bonding Flow



Access  
Pain/Fear/Longing



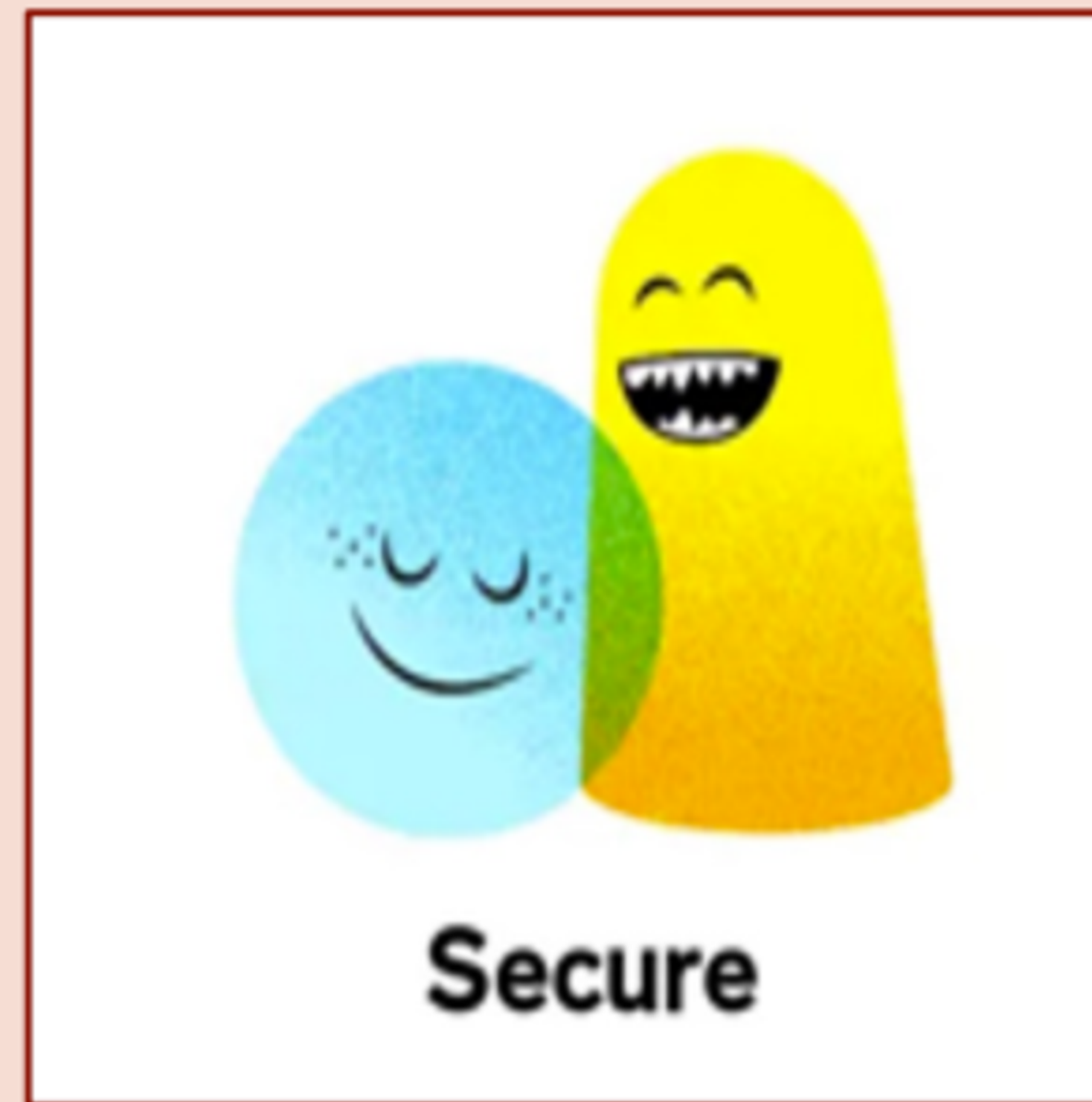
Share/Reach

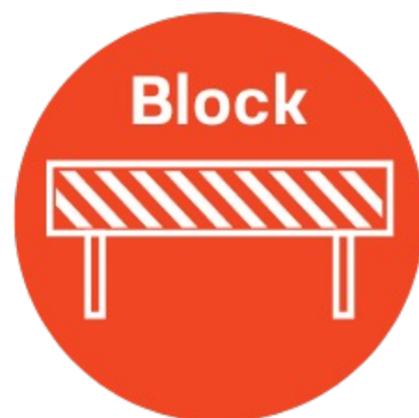


Access  
Empathy

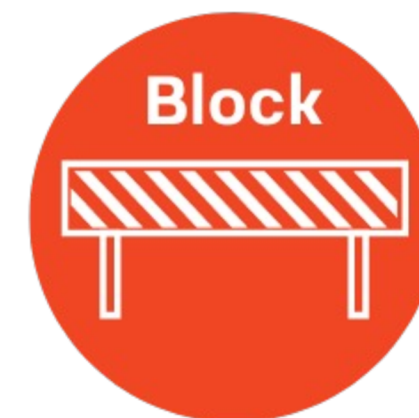








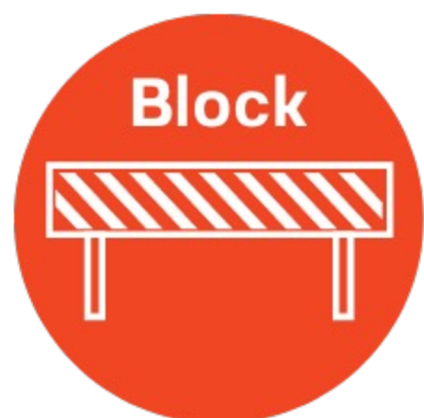
**Receive  
Comfort**



**Empathic  
Response**



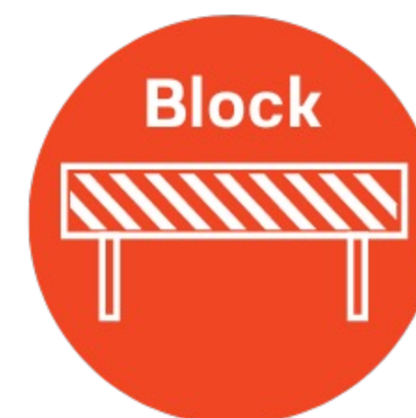
**Access  
Empathy**



**Access  
Pain/Fear/Longing**



**Share/Reach**



# Blocked Bonding flow





# Attachment Fears

- Fear of being rejected
- Fear of being abandoned
- Fear of not being seen
- Fear of not measuring up
- Fear of being a failure
- Fear of not being accepted
- Fear of being unlovable
- Fear of being controlled

# Insecure Attachment



Image Credit: <https://www.insider.com/guides/health/sex-relationships/attachment-styles>



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# Childhood Experiences of the Insecurely Attached!



Image Credit: <https://www.insider.com/guides/health/sex-relationships/attachment-styles>

**Inconsistent  
Response**







Image Credit: <https://www.insider.com/guides/health/sex-relationships/attachment-styles>

**Consistently  
Unresponsive**



Image Credit: <https://www.insider.com/guides/health/sex-relationships/attachment-styles>

**Consistently  
Scary  
Response**

Attachment Style	View of Self	View of Other
	Secure	+
	Anxious	+
	Avoidant	-
	Disorganized	-



# Styles vs Strategies



**Turning UP the Volume**  
**aka "protest"**

**Turning DOWN the Volume**  
**aka "protect"**

# **Honoring Attachment Strategies**

**Getting critical or chasing after partner in the hopes of changing the dynamic.**

**Responding dismissively or walking away in the hope that will avoid the fight.**





# Culture, Context, and Chemistry



# **Getting Couples to "Earned Secure"**





**Questions?**





**New Attachment Experiences,  
Just what the therapist ordered!**



**Theory of change: By bringing clients back to those places where they have struggled in the past, and giving them a new experience, they no longer see those places as threatening, and their capacity to reach vulnerably comes back online**



# **Model Overview**

**Stage 1: Stabalization/Deescalation:**  
(assessment, attachment history, cycle tracking, unite against the cycle, learning how to pause)

**Stage 2: Restructuring the Bond: (Reengaging withdrawn partner, softening pursuing partner, honoring needs)**

**Stage 3: Consolidation + Content**

The background features a stylized illustration of a landscape. On the left, there are two tall, thin trees with green foliage. At the bottom right, there are several rounded, green bushes. The ground is represented by a green grassy area at the bottom. The overall color palette is soft, with light yellows and greens.

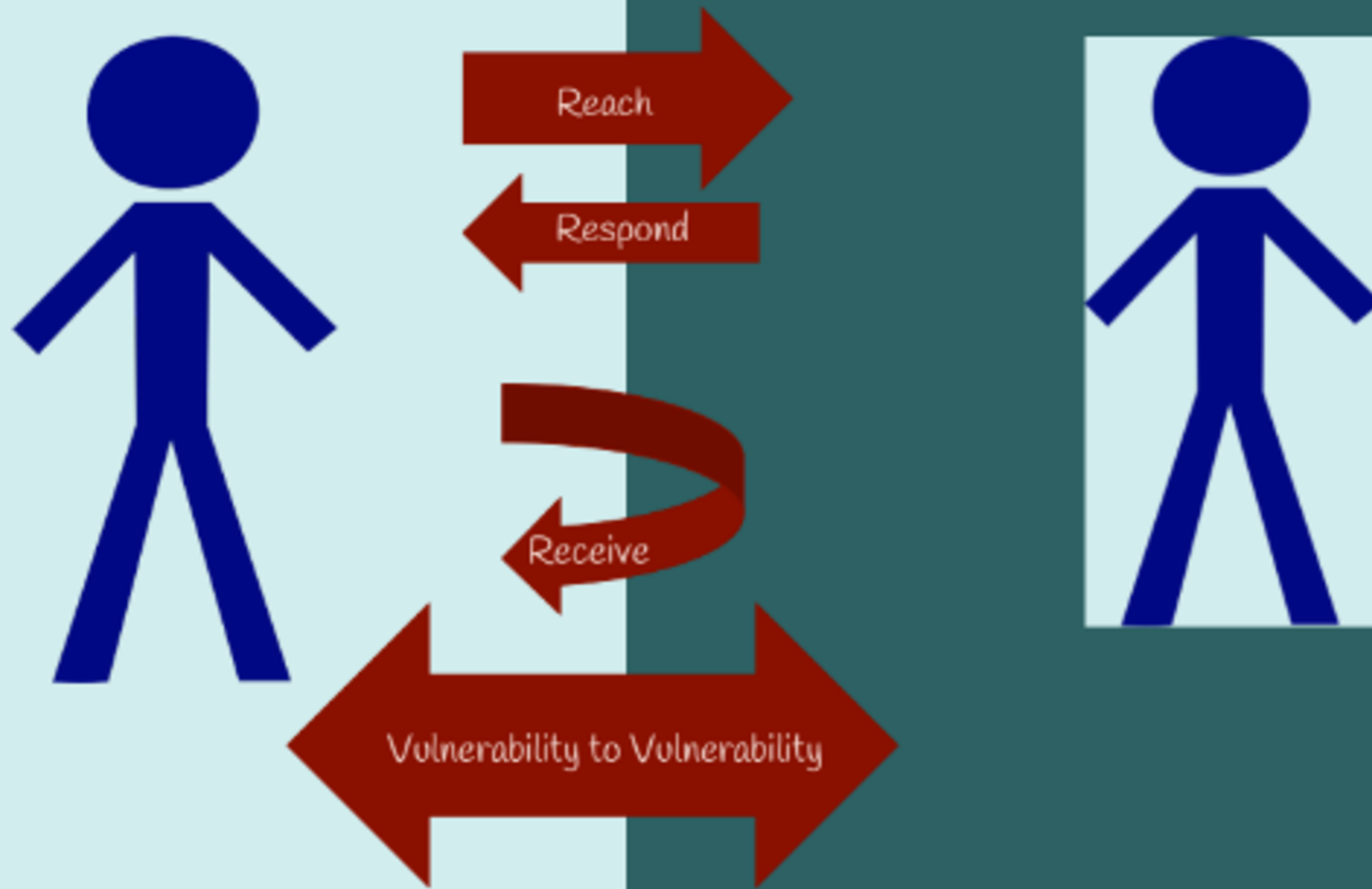
# **Contraindications: The Four A's**

- **Active Abuse**
- **Active Affairs**
- **Active Addictions**
- **Different Aims**



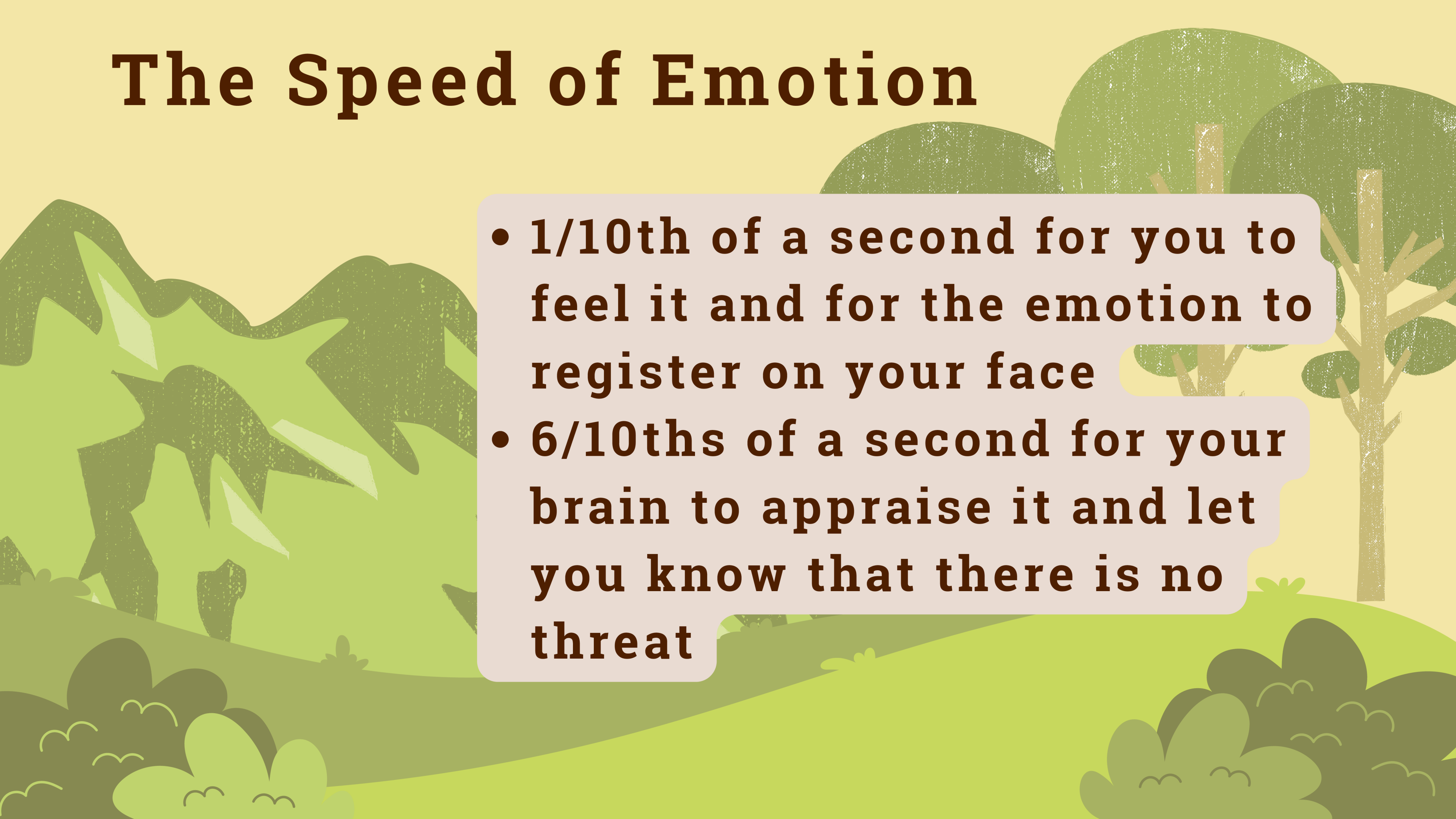
The background is a stylized landscape. On the left, there are three green trees of varying sizes. In the center, there are rolling green hills. On the right, there is a large, jagged green mountain with white patches. A winding green path leads from the bottom right towards the mountain. In the bottom left corner, there is a small blue pond with white ripples. The sky is a solid light yellow color, with two stylized clouds on the left and right sides. The clouds have a blue base and a white top with a textured, stippled appearance.

# **Teaching Your Clients EFT: First Session**





# The Speed of Emotion



- **1/10th of a second for you to feel it and for the emotion to register on your face**
- **6/10ths of a second for your brain to appraise it and let you know that there is no threat**

# Tracking the Cycle

We get a CUE that is rapidly assessed by our limbic system as a threat to our safety or the security of our attachments, which triggers a VULNERABLE EMOTION about an unmet or under threat ATTACHMENT NEED that impels our body to prepare for fight, flight or freeze, causing us to experience a PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE that we attempt to make sense of with a COGNITIVE APPRAISAL which in turn makes us feel a REACTIVE EMOTION that feels safer, moving us to take a PROTECTIVE ACTION.



# EMOTIONALLY FOCUSED THERAPY

The EFT Cycle Working “Within and Between”



# THE 5 Basic Moves of EFT

Repeat these 5 moves again and again, as you move through the steps and stages of EFT.






**T**racking  
**A**ssembling  
**eN**actment  
**G**o over  
**O**rganize



**Tracking the cycle: "what do you do  
when your partner does that"**

**When my partner tells me "don't  
worry" in response to my concern I  
tell him how dumb he is.**





# Assembling the Cycle

**"When you call me a doodoohead I feel insulted and hurt and think that you don't care about me. I then ignore you in the hope that you will see how much you've hurt me"**



# **Assembling the Cycle**

**what do you feel when he does that?**

**-dismissed invalidated**

**what thoughts are going through your  
head right before you critique?**

**-he doesn't care about me**


**what are you hoping to communicate?**

**-that he can't keep doing that**



# Assembling the Cycle

**"When I try to bring up money and you tell me "don't worry" I feel dismissed and invalidated and think that you don't care about my concerns. I then roll my eyes and call you "bad with money" in the hope that you will change."**

The background features a light yellow-green gradient. On the left and right sides, there are stylized trees with brown trunks and green, rounded foliage. At the bottom, there is a row of green grass blades. In the bottom right corner, there are some dark green, rounded bushes.

# What do you do?

**T**trigger

**E**motion

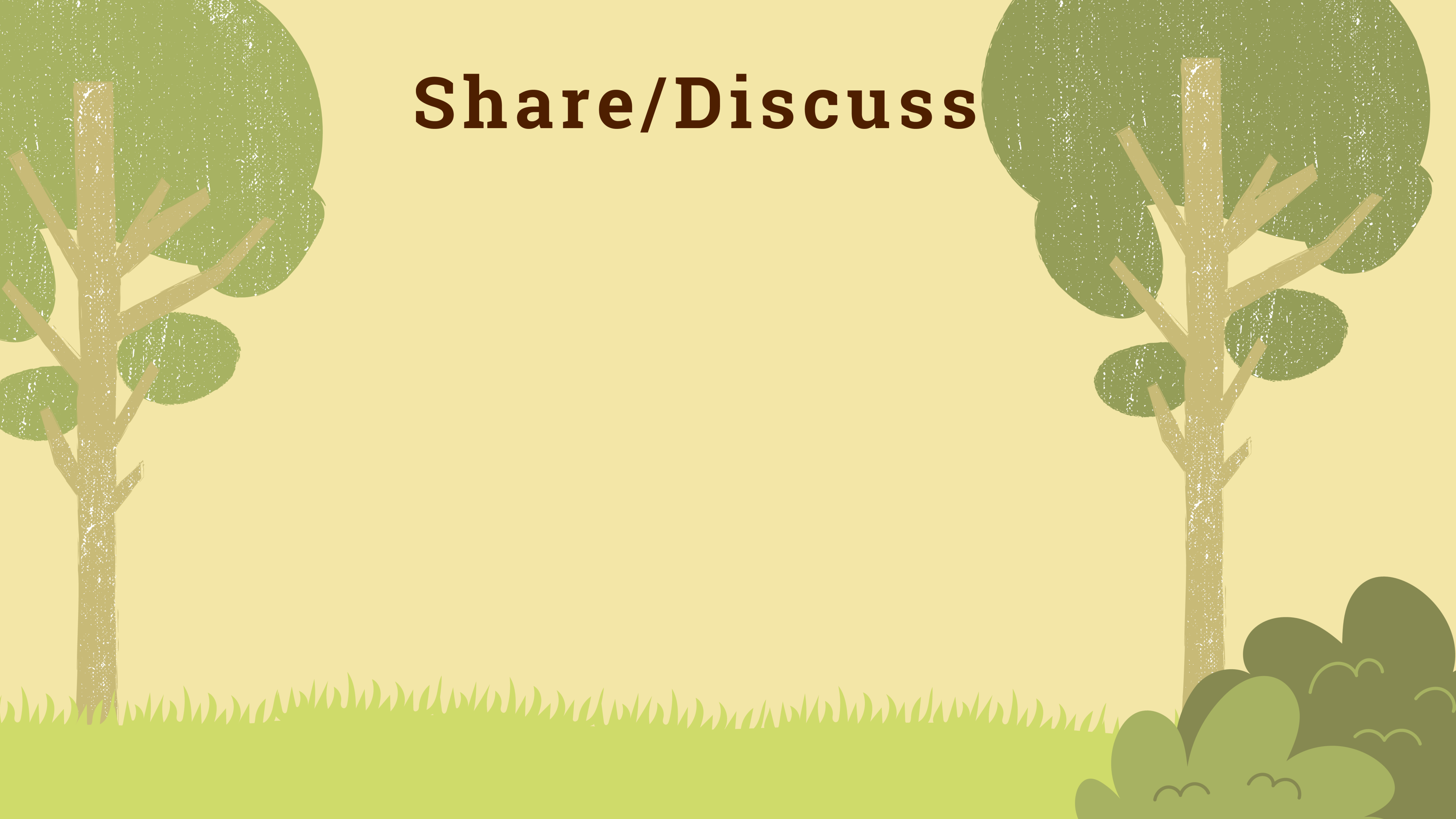
**M**eaning

**P**rotection

**(O**rganize)



# Share/Discuss





**R**eflect

**A**ttune

**A**ttachify

**V**alidate

**E**mpathize/

**E**xplore





# **Enactments: Sharing about the Cycle**

The background of the slide is a stylized landscape. It features rolling green hills in various shades of green. On the left, there are dark green, jagged shapes representing mountains or large bushes. On the right, there are several green trees with brown trunks. The overall style is flat and graphic, with a light yellow background.

**Sharing to own and  
acknowledge your  
position in the cycle**

# **Processing the Enactment**

**"I totally recognize that moment! Thank you for acknowledging that you do that--I think I understand a little more about why"**



The background features a stylized, hand-drawn illustration of a landscape. It includes rolling green hills, several trees with green foliage and brown trunks, and small white birds in flight. The overall color palette is soft and natural, with various shades of green and brown.

## **Key Reframes:**

- Fighting the cycle together**
- Adding Attachment Context**
- Gesturing toward Secure Attachment**
- Bringing it into the present**

# Organizing the Cycle: Cycle Summaries







# Demon Dances!





# **How Do You Know the Couple is Deescalated?**

**The couple can articulate the cycle while staying grounded and calm**

**The couple can acknowledge the impact their moves have on one another**

**While calm, each partner can offer grace for their partners move**




**Questions?**



**Breathe**





**Stage 2:**  
**"No risk-y, no get-y"**



# Withdrawer Reengagement



Avoidant

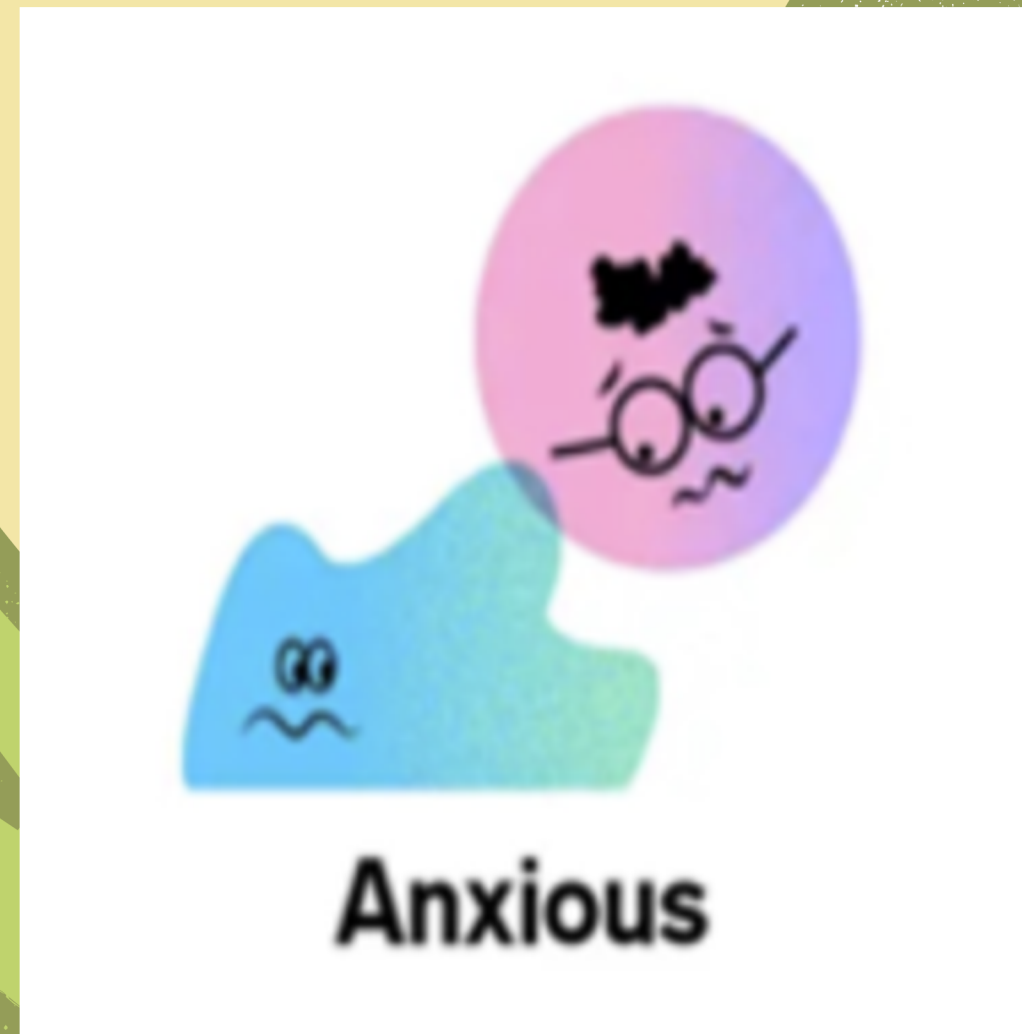


Disorganized





"I'm Afraid if I didn't..."



# Pursuer Softening



**"I'm Afraid if I didn't..."**

Attachment Style	View of Self	View of Other
	Secure	+
	Anxious	+
	Avoidant	-
	Disorganized	-

# **Client experiences of Stage 2**

**Ongoing change process  
Constant tweaking of reaching  
and responding**







**Asking for what you need**

# Stage 3





# Faith in the Attachment System





The background features a stylized illustration of a tree with a light brown trunk and green foliage on the left side. At the bottom, there is a row of green grass. In the bottom right corner, there are some green bushes or smaller trees. The overall color palette is warm, with yellow and green tones.


**Next Steps: Join us at Peer Group!**

**Metairie: First Thursday 6-8PM**

**Mobile: Second Monday 2-330PM**

**New Orleans: Third Tuesday 6-8PM**

**Baton Rouge: Fourth Tuesday 730-9AM**

The background is a solid yellow color. On the left side, there are two stylized trees with brown trunks and green, rounded foliage. At the bottom of the image, there is a row of green grass. In the bottom right corner, there are some dark green, rounded bushes.

# Next Steps

## Externship 2025?



**What I hope you leave here with:**

**- Attachment Lens**

**- Map of Sessions (tango)**

**- Map of Treatment (stages)**



**Keep an eye on your inbox!**





**Questions?**